

## AMENDMENTS

### In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 4 with the following:

E1  
Cutting dies are known for cutting or severing one portion of a stock material from another. For example, cutting dies are used for cutting sheets of paperboard or plastic or metal into predetermined blanks. In one form of known cutting operation, two rotary cylinders, each having small integral cutting blades extending radially from the cylindrical surface, are juxtaposed so that when rotated, the blades engage generally opposite sides of a work stock and cooperate to sever the stock into a blank, the shape of which is determined by the blade configuration. One such operation is illustrated in U.S. Patent No. 4,608,895, incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 20 with the following:

E2  
In contrast, the material which is preferably introduced in powder form, to form the blade 14, may be of another material selected based on the desired parameters of the die blade. This material can be a very high grade steel, such as CMP10V or CMP15V, or a metal-ceramic composite, such as a nickel base superalloy plus 30-40% (volume fraction) tungsten carbides. These materials, by definition, include carbides, and are compositionally different and of greater hardness than base materials such as medium carbon plain steels or medium carbon low alloy steels.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 4 with the following:

E3  
Presently, the deposition of powder through a powder nozzle, for example (not shown), forms a generally half ellipse cross-sectional die blade 14 as illustrated in Fig. 3. It is preferable to have the final die blade in a cross-sectional profile with edges which are somewhat tapered such as, for example, at about 25° to about 35°. Such die blade shapes, for example, are disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,608,895, which render the die blades suitable for contact with an opposing die for cutting a work piece inserted therebetween. Patent No. 4,608,895 also depicts blades that meet or intersect each other, which as stated above, was a problem with prior processes.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 3 with the following:

E4  
It may be desirable to further harden the die blade and this may be accomplished by any suitable technique, such as by raising the die blade material to a temperature sufficient for further strengthening that material and/or by cryogenic treating the clad tracks to eliminate the remaining austenite in the cladding material. For example, the die blade could be treated by scanning a laser beam along the die blades where the parameter of the traverse speed and intensity are appropriate to produce the optimum microstructures and hardness. It will be appreciated, however, that by virtue of the use of very high quality steel in the forming of the blade, such as those mentioned above, the optional heat treating steps for strengthening die blade may be unnecessary, because the high quality steel can inherently provide a hardness equivalent to the final desired hardness of the blade. Alternatively, localized hardening might be accomplished by induction heating.